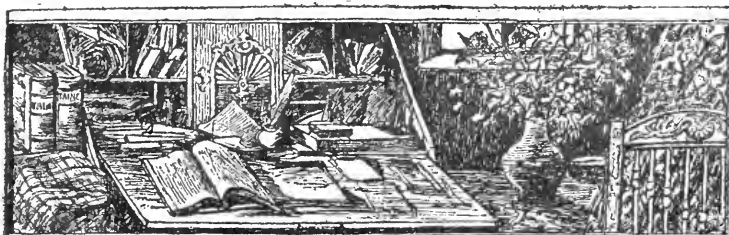


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—BY—

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# **ALONG CAME BUD**

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**A TWO ACT COMEDY**

— *By* —  
**ROSS FARQUHAR**

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**ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE,**  
**Franklin, Ohio** **Denver, Colo.**

PS635  
.79 Feb 66

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

†

WILLIAM BROWN—a stern father

MRS. BROWN—a regular mother

JUNE—the daughter

DICK—the big brother

BUD—a real boy

BILLY BROOKS—in love with June

DEC 30 1920

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# ALONG CAME BUD

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## ACT I.

*(Scene:—Living room in the home of Wm. Brown.)*

*(Time:—Saturday afternoon.)*

*(At rise of curtain Mrs. Brown is discovered reading magazine. Dick is heard off left humming or whistling a popular air.)*

Dick—*(off left)* Oh, June.

Mrs. Brown—June isn't here, Dick.

Dick—Where is she?

Mrs. B.—She is out with some of the girls, taking pictures. You know she has rigged up her camera with a long rubber tube in order to get in the pictures as she takes them.

Dick—June and her old camera! It's a wonder she wouldn't stay at home now and then.

Mrs. B.—What is it you want? Perhaps I may be able to help you.

Dick—*(entering left)* I was wondering if she knew anything about my new tie.

Mrs. B.—I don't suppose she had it. Can't you find it?

Dick—I have looked high and low, but it cannot be found. Well, never mind. I'll wear another. I'm going down and get out the machine. *(Exit center.)*

Mrs. B.—I have an idea, that if his tie is gone, Bud has had something to do with it. That boy is certainly the limit. He simply can not keep out of mischief. Yet he is not really bad—truthful as the day is long and one cannot be angry with him, although—

*(Enter Dick, C., tie in his hand.)*

Dick—Mother, just look at this.

Mrs. B.—Is that your tie? Where was it?

Dick—Evidently Bud has been staging a dog show. I found it tied around the dog's neck and he has printed on it with a pencil, "1st. prize." Mother, that boy should be attended to: he is positively exasperating at times.

Mrs. B.—I know, Dick. But, I guess we are all to blame. We have spoiled him.

*(Commotion heard outside. Bud enters hastily.)*

Bud—*(looks at tie in Dick's hand and smiles.)* Oh, goody! I was afraid it was lost. You know, Dick, I had to have a ribbon for Doughboy's neck and that seemed to be just right. And when I came home I saw it was gone, and I was worried for fear he had scratched it off, maybe, and lost it. *(Turns suddenly and runs to door C. and looks out anxiously.)*

Dick—What are you looking for?

Bud—*(with head hanging)* Oh, nothing—much.

Mrs. B.—Now, Son, you've been in mischief again. What is it this time?

Bud—Oh, Mother, it wasn't nothing—very much. I don't like to worry you with all my troubles.

Mrs. B.—They worry me more when I do not know just what they are. Come—tell Mother.

Bud—Well, I've been having a little trouble.

Dick—*(crossly)* You're having trouble all the time. What was it this time? If I were in your place, Mother, I'd—

Mrs. B.—Now, Dick, you run away. I'll talk to Bud.

*(Exit Dick, mumbling.)*

Mrs. B.—*(puts her arm around Bud)* Now, tell me all about it.

Bud—Well, I guess you won't rest till you hear it, will you? Mother, why are ladies so full of cur'osity?

*Mrs. B.*—It isn't curiosity in this case. But I am anxious for you and it worries me when you get into mischief and have trouble. Now—you were going to tell me.

*Bud*—Well, one of Mrs. Joyce's nice pullets just died.

*Mrs. B.*—One of her pullets died? Well, what has that to do with you?

*Bud*—It hasn't anything to do with me. But I had something to do with it.

*Mrs. B.*—Bud! You killed it?

*Bud*—Yes, Mother.

*Mrs. B.*—Why that was terrible. Now, you must go right up there and tell her about it and apologize and tell her that you will pay her for it.

*Bud*—She knows all about it. Anyways it was a accident.

*Mrs. B.*—An accident? How did it happen?

*Bud*—I was throwin' at a rooster and just by mistake I hit the pullet.

*Mrs. B.*—What did Mrs. Joyce say?

*Bud*—I can't tell you all she said—being a gentleman; but she give me strick permission to stay out of her yard, forever and ever.

*Mrs. B.*—Well, Bud, I don't know what will become of us if you don't improve and keep out of mischief.

*(Enter June, C., holding camera in her hand. She places camera on table near window. Holds package representing bonds, in her hand.)*

*June*—Is Father here?

*Mrs. B.*—No, he hasn't come home yet.

*June*—Mr. Holmes forgot to put these bonds in the safety deposit box at the bank and was called to St. Louis on urgent business; so he asked me to have Father put them in his safe until Monday.

*(Telephone rings and June lays bonds on mantel as she goes to answer it.) (Exit Mrs. B. right.)*

*June*—(takes receiver) Hello \* \* Yes, this is she.  
\* \* Sure, I'm at home. \* \* All right. Come on up,  
*Billy*. \* \* Good-bye. (Hangs up receiver.)

*Bud*—Was that Billy Brooks?

*June*—Yes, it was Billy—inquisitive.

*Bud*—Whatcha call him that for?

*June*—What do I call him what, for?

*Bud*—Billy Inquisity, or somethin' like that.

*June*—I said you are inquisitive—nosey, you know.

*Bud*—(after a pause) Say, Sis, what was you rafflin' off night 'fore last?

*June*—What do you mean? I wasn't raffling anything. Why?

*Bud*—You must have been. I passed the door and I heard Billy sayin', very pitiful, "Please, June, won't you give me a chance—just a chance?"

*June*—(excitedly) Buddy Brown, don't you ever dare breathe that to another soul, do you hear? Now, I am going over to Edna's. I'll be back in a few minutes. (Exit C.)

*Bud*—I wonder what she meant about Billy. S'pose that fellow wants to marry her? I bet that's what it is, because I heard him singin' something about "What's so rare as a day with June," the other evening. Oh, boy! Won't I have some fun with him if he does? He's all right, though, 'cause he slips me a dime purty often. (Walks to mantel and sees package of bonds.) Gee! I guess June forgot these papers. Well, I'll have a little fun with her. Anyway she had no business callin' me nosey. So I'll just hide them for awhile. Anybody could steal them there on the mantel anyway. (Takes bonds from mantel and places them behind large picture hanging on wall. He then goes to camera and takes it up and winds the roll of film a little. Sets camera to face window at such distance that a picture could be taken of a person in the window, if shutter was opened. The bulb is placed on the floor in front of window.) (Knock at door. Bud



*opens door and admits Billy Brooks.*) Come in, Billy—I mean Mr. Brooks. June went over to Edna's to borrow some powder 'cause she's been out takin' pitchers, and she wants to look nice when you're here.

Billy—All right, Buddy, I'll wait. *(Sits.)* Playing much baseball now?

Bud—Oh, some. I would play more, only I haven't any good mitt. I saw one down to the store today for 50 cents?

Billy—*(studying)* Well, now, a nice, bright boy like you ought to have no trouble in finding work of some kind—enough to earn fifty cents.

Bud—*(aside)* I guess I hit him too strong that time. *(To Billy.)* Well, so long—good luck to you. *(Exit C.)*

Billy—So long. That kid ought to get along. He has the "pep" all right. And he's not suffering from an overdose of timidity either. I was going to slip him a little capital for his mitt, but he left so soon. It's not a bad idea to keep on the good side of the younger brother, at that—*(Telephone rings. Billy starts to answer, then hesitates. As no one comes to answer, he takes down receiver.)* Hello \* \* Brown's residence. \* \* This is Billy talking. \* \* What? \* \* Left the papers out of the vault? \* \* I'll be right there. \* \* Good-bye. *(Hangs up.)* If that wasn't stupid of me. Left a pile of valuable papers on the desk and locked the vault. Well, I must hurry down, and explain to June when I come back. *(Exit C.)*

*(Phone rings again. Pause of a few seconds. Rings again. Enter Mrs. B. to answer.)*

Mrs. B.—I thought June and Billy were here. *(Takes down receiver.)* Hello \* \* Yes \* \* Is it ready for me to try on? \* \* In ten minutes. \* \* Good-bye. *(Hangs up.)* I guess June and Billy went out for a walk. Well, I'll run over to Mrs. King's and try on my dress. But I guess I had better lock the door. *(Exit C.. Sound of key in door.)*

(After lapse of few seconds, auto horn is heard. Auto stops in front of house. Steps heard and hand rattles knob of door.)

Dick—(off stage, C.) Oh, Mother—June—Oh, shucks! Locked out. Well, I've got to get in, that's all there is to it. (Appears at window; tries it and finds it unlocked. Raises window and steps inside. Stops suddenly and looks toward camera which is pointed at him.) Well, if it didn't sound like that camera clicked, I'll eat my hat. I guess I'm hearing things today. I've got to get my golf clubs and hurry out to the links. Joe will think I'm never coming. (Walks off R. and emerges a few moments later carrying golf bag. Looks out of window and stops.) There comes June. If she catches me, she will force me to take her for a ride, so I'll just slip out the rear door and give her the slip. I have no time to fool with girls today—especially sisters. (Exit R. June rattles door C.)

June—(off C.) Why, the door's locked. Oh! Here comes Mother. I suppose she locked it. (Sound of key. Door opens. Enter Mrs. B. and June.)

June—(to Mrs. B.) We took some dandy views and then we happened along the bend of the river below the dam and there on a large rock sat Ethel and Sam and—oh, you should have seen the pose—so I snapped them, but don't dare to breathe a word until I get them developed. I have one more exposure on the film, so I am going to take a picture of Doughboy and send the film to be developed. (Walks to camera. Looks at number on back of film. Looks perplexed.) Why, I thought I had one left. Well, I guess I miscounted.

Mrs. B.—Hurry and send them. I'm just dying to see that picture of Ethel and Sam.

(Voice of Bud humming popular tune outside.)

(Exit Mrs. B., R.)

Bud—(entering C.) Hello, June, where's Billy?

June—I guess he hasn't come yet.

Bud—Sure he has. I left him here, waitin' for you.

June—You did? Well, that's queer. Say, Buddy, I want you to take this roll of films (*takes out roll and wraps in paper.*) down to the drug store to be developed, and order two prints of each picture. (*Hands roll to Bud*)

Bud—All right; but don't you think a fellow ever gets tired running old errands for girls?

June—(*opening purse*) Now, Bud, you're not so tired, are you? (*Hands him coin.*)

Bud—(*smiling*) Oh, not so very. (*Exit C.*)

June—Oh, yes; I must attend to those—(*looks on mantel; looks horrified*) —My gracious! What has become of those bonds? I laid them here on the mantel when I came home. (*Calls.*) Mother!

(*Enter Mrs. B., L.*)

Mrs. B.—What is it, June?

June—The bonds!

Mrs. B.—What about them?

June—They're gone.

Mrs. B.—Gone! Where?

June—That's it—where? I placed them right here (*Points.*) and ran over to Edna's for a minute. Now, they're gone. Oh, what will I do?

Mrs. B.—Who could have taken them? Let us think. I locked the house when I left to go to Mrs. King's, to try on my dress. Bud was gone and just a few moments ago returned; and then Bud wouldn't know the value of bonds anyway. You were over at Edna's. (*Pause.*) Billy was here—where is Billy?

June—(*wide-eyed*) Billy! Billy was here! And he has gone!

Mrs. B.—You don't think Billy would—would st—take the bonds, do you, June?

June—(*crying*) Oh, no!

Mrs. B.—Of course he wouldn't—but—well, why did he go out so suddenly? I heard him in here talking to Bud. Then I heard Bud leave the house. And when I came in the room it was empty. Here comes Father, now.

*(Enter Mr. Brown.)*

Mr. B.—Well, well, what's all the excitement and tears about?

Mrs. B.—Mr. Holmes gave June some bonds which he had forgotten to put in his safety deposit box at the bank. As he was called to St. Louis, he wanted you to put them in your safe until Monday. June laid them on the mantel, right there *(points)*. We all happened to be out of the house at once and on our return, discovered that they were gone.

Mr. B.—Was there anybody else in the house?

Mrs. B.—*(looking at June, who cries harder)* Only —Billy Brooks.

Mr. B.—Billy! *(Pause.)* Well, it looks bad for Billy, then. I feel responsible, in a way, for the bonds, so I guess there is only one thing to do, and that is to have him watched.

June—*(rushes to Mr. B. and throws arms around him.)* Oh, Father, don't! I couldn't bear it.

Mr. B.—But, June, if he *is* guilty you would want to know it, wouldn't you? And if he is innocent he can certainly prove it. Besides, we owe it to ourselves, and to Mr. Holmes, to take immediate steps toward the recovery of the bonds.

June—Wait until Bud comes home. Maybe he knows something about them.

Mr. B.—No, no! Bud must not hear a word of it, if we wish to keep it quiet. No, we must not tell him. Kids cannot keep secrets.

*(Mr. B. walks to phone; takes down receiver.)* 2-2-0 please. *(Pause.)* Police station? \* \* This is Mr. William Brown, 1225 Park Avenue. \* \* A package of bonds belonging to J. D. Holmes has been stolen from my home, where they were left for safe-keeping. \* \* Only one person, to our knowledge, outside of the family, has been here. \* \* William Brooks. \* \* Do not arrest him but keep him under close surveillance. \* \* Thank you. *(Hangs up.)*

(*Bud enters C., apparently out of breath.*) (*All turn to look at him. Mr. B. signals silence.*)

**Bud**—Say, did you hear the latest—about Billy Brooks?

(*All look interested, but remain silent—wondering.*)

**Mr. B.**—What do you mean, Son?

**Bud**—I just now saw him in the jewelry store, and he was buyin' a fine diamond ring—ladies' size. (*Points a finger at June.*) (*Mr. B. frowns. Jane covers face and leans on Mrs. B.'s shoulder. Bud looks on in perplexity.*)

## CURTAIN

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## ACT II.

(*Scene—Same as Act. I.*) (*Two days later; evening*)  
(*Mr. and Mrs. B., June and Dick are discovered in conversation.*)

**Dick**—Father, what do the police report, regarding the bonds?

**Mr. B.**—Nothing definite, as yet.

**Dick**—Did you know that Billy Brooks ordered a new car today?

**June**—(*looking up suddenly*) Why, he has intended doing that for several months.

**Dick**—No doubt. And apparently he has just found the means that made it possible. You heard about the ring, also, didn't you?

**June**—Dick, I think you are positively mean. You seem determined to fasten the guilt on Billy; and the only evidence you have is the fact that he was here and left suddenly.

**Dick**—Is that all? Well you might tell us why he didn't put in his appearance last evening, as he has been doing every Sunday for the past ten months.

*June*—Because he was requested not to come. He called me up and was coming, but I asked him not to come, for I realized it would be very embarrassing for all concerned.

*Mrs. B.*—Yes, Dick, I think you are unjust to Mr. Brooks. As long as there remains a reasonable doubt, I believe we should give him the benefit.

*Dick*—Yes, give him the benefit of the doubt; let him spend all the money and pull up stakes; then when it is too late, face Mr. Holmes and ask him to excuse you for allowing his bonds to be stolen.

*(Enter Bud, C. Mr. B. puts up a finger and warns them to be silent regarding bonds.)*

*Bud*—Here's your pitchers, June. Hurry and open 'em up and let's see 'em.

*Dick*—*(rising)* Well, I'm going to the club. I hope you people will not do anything rash in my absence.

*June*—*(unwrapping package)* Don't you want to see my snap-shots, Dick?

*Dick*—*(shortly)* No. *(Puts on hat. Exit C.)*

*Bud*—*(looking over June's shoulder)* Didn't you take nothin' only rivers and trees? Didn't you take folks or anything? Why don't you take one of our baseball nine? I bet I could sell 'bout a dozen of 'em for a dime apiece. A nickel, anyways.

*June*—*(endeavoring to hide one of the pictures)* That would be good business. They cost me seven cents each.

*Bud*—What's 'at you're hidin'? Come on, June, let's see it.

*June*—Well, you mustn't say a word about it if I do show you

*Bud*—No, I won't. *(Looks at photo and laughs.)* Well, what do you know about that? That's Ethel and Sam, ain't it? They must be gonna get married.

*(Mr. and Mrs. B. cross room and look at picture and smile.)*

*June—(takes up another print and looks at it, puzzled.)* Why, Mother, I don't understand this. I did not take a picture of Dick, but here is his photograph. Look.

*Mrs. B.—(looking at print.)* Why, what is he doing?  
*(Hands print to Mr. B.)*

*Mr. B.—(after examining print, looks at window at back, near door C.)* It looks to me as if he were climbing in or out of a window—that window there. *(Points.)* Do you suppose—Bud, you run outside for a few minutes. We wish to talk about something, about which you know nothing.

*Bud—(pouting)* Well, it looks like I wouldn't ever know nothin'. Whenever you want to talk about anything, it's "Bud, you run along, now. I want to say something to somebody." I wouldn't tell nobody. If I had a nickel, I'd go down and get some candy.

*Mr. B.—(reaching in pocket)* All right. Here you are. Now, run along.

*(Exit Bud, whistling.)*

*Mr. B.—(again looks at photo.)* Do you suppose Dick could have done this, Mother?

*Mrs. B.—*Surely, not. Dick isn't that hard run.

*June—*Why, I wouldn't think of accusing him of stealing—but it does look queer. He seemed so anxious to fasten suspicion on Billy.

*Mrs. B.—*That's because he is jealous of his only sister, June. You know, as rough as he is sometimes, he worships you, and he cannot bear the thought of having some fellow come along and capture your heart.

*June—(walks over to stand where camera sits; points it toward window. Takes long rubber tube and carries bulb to point on floor, directly in front of window. Steps back and looks intently at camera and window.)*

*Mr. B.—*June, what are you doing?

*June—*Well, I am just investigating something; following a clew, as the detectives say.

*Mr. B.—*What kind of a clew are you following?

*June*—I don't know just what kind it is, but—well, you see, I left that camera sitting on the stand there where you see it now. You will observe that I have a long tube attached with this bulb at the end, which arrangement enables me to take a picture and at the same time be in it. Now, if this bulb had fallen to the floor, as it probably did, here in front of the window, and some person entering the window had stepped upon it, it would have operated the shutter of the camera, exposing the film. When I placed the camera there, Saturday afternoon, I was sure that I had one exposure left on the film. I intended taking the dog's picture, but I noticed that the film had been turned. Now, you see a picture, which I did not take and there can be no doubt as to the identity of the subject.

*Mrs. B.*—But, my dear, it is absurd that suspicion should for a moment rest upon Dick.

*June*—I do not say that Dick took the bonds; I surely hope he did not; but this one thing is certain: the camera took Dick's picture climbing in a window.

*Mr. B.*—Call him up at his club and request that he come home at once—Wait; someone is coming now.

*(Enter Dick, C.)*

*Dick*—*(looks around at the occupants of room, who look at him but remain silent.)* Well, why all the gloom? Something serious happen?

*Mr. B.*—Rather serious—yes.

*Dick*—Well, can't you let me in on it?

*Mr. B.*—Yes. In fact we want you in on it. I have some questions to ask you.

*Dick*—I'm ready.

*Mr. B.*—When did you first learn of the presence in this house of Mr. Holmes' bonds?

*Dick*—Why—why, not until they were gone.

*Mr. B.*—Did you return to the house after you left for the golf links?

*Dick*—Yes.



*Mr. B.—(Crosses to June and takes picture from her hand.)* When was this picture taken, and who took it? *(Hands print to Dick.)*

*Dick—(appears puzzled and looks, first at picture, then from one to another.)* Why—I had no picture taken—so far as I was aware.

*Mr. B.—*That is your photograph, is it not?

*Dick—*It sure looks like the face I often see in the mirror—but how—

*Mr. B.—*Why did you enter through the window?

*Dick—*To save the door. It was locked, and I simply had to have my golf clubs. Say—when I stepped in here, I heard a click and it sounded like a camera, but I could see nobody operating the thing. How on earth—

*June—*Pardon me for interrupting, but how did you leave the house? When I came over from Edna's I saw your car outside. A few moments later I looked out and it was gone. I did not give it a thought then. But now I cannot recall having seen you leave the house.

*Dick—*Why, I—oh, yes—I went out the back way. I was afraid—I thought perhaps you would want to take a ride and I was in a hurry to get to the links.

*Mr. B.—*My boy, I do not want to think, and I do not think that you took those bonds, but it does look very mysterious.

*Dick—*Why, what would I want with the old bonds?

*(Bud enters, C., unobserved by others. Stands quietly by door and listens.)*

*June—*What would anybody want with them? What would Billy Brooks want with them? He has a good position and could get along without stealing. Still, you were not slow in trying to fasten the guilt upon him. Oh, I wish—*(crys. Exit, L.)*

*Dick—*Why, Mother, you know I wouldn't take them, don't you?

*Mrs. B.—(putting arm around him)* I would not believe it until I was forced to do so. *(Turns and sees Bud at door.)* Bud, how long have you been here?

*Bud*—Oh, not very long, but I was so interested I didn't want to make any noise, 'cause you never talk much when you know I'm around.

*Mr. B.*—I never knew you could be so quiet.

*Bud*—(*goes over to Dick*) What's the trouble, Dick?

*Dick*—Nothing much, Buddy. Only we are trying to solve a difficult problem.

*Bud*—Can't I help you? I only got sixty in my problems today, but that was because I was in a hurry and put down some of the answers wrong.

*Dick*—Bud, did you see any—

*Mr. B.*—No, no, Dick; Bud doesn't know about this.

*Dick*—It appears that nobody knows much about it. But, now that I am under suspicion, I am not going to stop until I have turned every stone. Now, Bud, old man, I'm trying hard to find out some things. It may be you can help me. Billy, also, is in trouble, and you may help him, too—I hope so.

*Bud*—Gee! I must be gettin' very important.

(*Enter June, wiping her eyes.*)

*Bud*—What's the matter with June? She looks like a nervous wretch. Go ahead, Dick.

*Dick*—Were you in this room while Billy was here, Saturday afternoon?

*Bud*—Yes, we had a chat and I tried to talk him out of fifty cents for a mitt. But he didn't fall for it, and—

*Dick*—Never mind the mitt, now. Did he leave the room while you were here?

*Bud*—No, I left him here in the room, waitin' for June.

*June*—Bud, did you touch my camera, last Saturday?

*Bud*—Say, am I gettin' the Third Degree?

*Mr. B.*—Answer the questions, Son. You may be able to help us.

*Bud*—Let's see. Yes, I believe I did touch it—a little.

*June*—What did you do to it?

*Bud*—I wound it up a little—that's all.

*Mrs. B.*—Did you see any bonds here in the room while Mr. Brooks was here?

*Bud*—If I had, I sure would have taken one, for I was hungry as a bear. You know me and Slim had went a-fishin', and—

*Mrs. B.*—No, Bud, you misunderstood me. Not buns; bonds, B—O—N—D—S —papers.

*Bud*—What kind of papers?

*Mr. B.*—Official-looking papers. Something like—did you ever see a Liberty Bond?

*Bud*—Oh, something like a insurance policy, you mean?

*Mr. B.*—Yes. Did you see anything like that?

*Bud*—Why, I believe I did.

*All*—Where?

*Bud*—Over on the mantel. I just thought mebbly they they might be important and shouldn't ought to be left around, so promiscuous, so I put them away where they'd be safe.

*June*—Put them away! Where?

*Bud*—(*Walks over to picture and recovers package of bonds.*) Here.

(*The others reach for them and Bud hands them to June, who hugs the bonds, then kisses Bud and Dick. Everybody seems happy. Phone rings. Mr. B. answers.*)

*Mr. B.*—Brown's residence. \* \* Yes, she is here. June you're wanted.

*June*—(*taking receiver*) Hello. \* \* Oh, hello, Billy. \* \* Sure, you may come up. \* \* Yes, hurry. \* \* Goodbye. (*Hangs up.*)

*Mr. B.*—(*to Bud*) Now, young man, see the trouble you have caused by your mischief-making?

*Bud*—Why, Father, from the looks of all you people, I have pulled you *out* of trouble.

Mrs. B.—Now, William, he did not hide them to cause trouble, did you Sonny? (*Puts arm around Bud.*)

Bud—Why, certainly not, Mother. I saw them there on the mantel, and I just kinda thought maybe they were valuable and ought to be put away. So I put them back there. Anyway, why didn't you ask me in the first place? You know I'm gettin' sort of forgetful here of lately.

(*Enter Billy Brooks, C. June takes his hand and conducts him to a chair.*)

Billy—Good evening, everybody. (*Sits.*)

All—Good evening, Billy.

Mr. B.—Billy, in behalf of the family, and myself in particular, I wish to apologize to you for our unjust suspicions of you.

Billy—Suspicious? What do you mean?

Mr. B.—A package of bonds, belonging to Mr. Holmes, was missing from the mantel last Saturday, just after your sudden departure from here. Naturally we thought it rather strange, so I have had a plain-clothes man watching you. Then later, our suspicions rested upon a member of the family, Dick. However, it is all cleared up now, and all is well and all are happy. Bud has lifted the veil. (*Shakes hands with Billy.*)

Dick—(*Rises and takes Billy's hand.*) Let's congratulate each other, old scout. Why, they even have a picture of me, as I entered the window.

(*Mrs. B. sits down and Bud crawls on her lap.*)

Bud—I'm gettin' awfully sleepy, folks, but before I retire to my room, I want to give you some advice. You must remember that kids is human and we don't like to be pushed to one side all the time. You say we don't know much. Course not—you older folks never want to tell us nothin'. If you had told me what was the trouble I would of cleared it up long ago. But whenever I come around, you wink at each other and put up your finger and go "s-s-s-h." You can't run a home without confidence in each another.

*Mr. B.*—I think we must admit the wisdom of the boy's remarks. We are inclined to ignore the youngsters and push them aside. We give them to understand that they are of little consequence. And, now I realize that, in order to gain confidence, we must give it.

*(Bud, by this time, has gone to sleep on his mother's knee.)*

*Mr. B.*—*(after short pause.)* So I herewith move that the entire household, present and prospective, give a vote of thanks to Buddy Brown.

*All*—Aye, aye.

*(Dick and Billy pick up Bud and place him on their shoulders and march around the room. Bud rubs his eyes and nods sleepily.)*

CURTAIN

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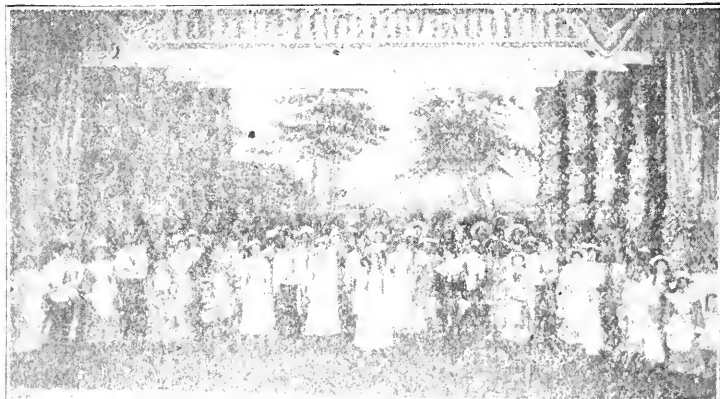
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